

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT  
RESOLUTION No. 175**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**219th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED MAY 14, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY**

**District 7 (Burlington)**

**Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER**

**District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)**

**Assemblyman ERIC HOUGHTALING**

**District 11 (Monmouth)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Expresses support for establishment of “Farmers Bill of Rights.”

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/14/2020)**

1   **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** expressing support for a “Farmers  
2    Bill of Rights.”  
3  
4   **WHEREAS**, According to the Department of Agriculture, food and  
5    agriculture are New Jersey's third largest industry, behind  
6    pharmaceuticals and tourism, bringing in billions of dollars in  
7    revenue to the State; and  
8   **WHEREAS**, Farmers in the Garden State produce more than 100  
9    different kinds of fruits and vegetables for consumers to enjoy here  
10   in New Jersey, elsewhere in the Northeast, in Canada, or in many  
11   countries around the world; and  
12   **WHEREAS**, Nationally, New Jersey is one of the top 10 producers of  
13   blueberries, cranberries, peaches, tomatoes, bell peppers, eggplant,  
14   cucumbers, apples, spinach, squash, and asparagus; and  
15   **WHEREAS**, New Jersey’s farmers also produce hundreds of thousands  
16   of dollars’ worth of specialty crops that added many unique flavors  
17   to the Garden State’s bounty; and  
18   **WHEREAS**, The Center for American Progress has reported that,  
19   across the country, mergers and acquisitions have increased  
20   corporate concentration across agricultural markets, including an  
21   oligopoly of 85 percent of the corn seed market in the four largest  
22   firms in the seed sector; and  
23   **WHEREAS**, According to the Open Markets Institute, excessive  
24   concentration in the poultry industry has resulted in half of the  
25   country’s chicken farmers working in regions dominated by only  
26   one or two processing companies, leaving those farmers with little,  
27   if any, bargaining power for better contracts or growing terms; and  
28   **WHEREAS**, The Organization for Competitive Markets has reported  
29   cattle prices paid to farmers from 2013 to 2016 dropped by 13  
30   percent, while during the same period prices paid for beef by  
31   consumers at the grocery store increased by four percent,  
32   suggesting that the prices paid to farmers and by consumers are not  
33   the result of a fair and just market; and  
34   **WHEREAS**, Corporate concentration and abusive practices in  
35   America’s food and farm sector are harming consumers, rural  
36   communities, family farmers, and ranchers, including historically  
37   underserved farmers and ranchers, by diminishing the availability  
38   of seed choice, limiting the accessibility of domestic farming lands,  
39   increasing food prices, manipulating markets, and hindering access  
40   to traditional foodways and agricultural practices; and  
41   **WHEREAS**, Increasing farm debt, decreasing incomes, and  
42   deteriorating overall conditions for family farmers and ranchers are  
43   causing farm foreclosures and Chapter 12 bankruptcies to steadily  
44   increase across the country; and  
45   **WHEREAS**, According to the Midwest Center for Investigative  
46   Reporting, foreign acquisition of, and increasing investments in,  
47   American farmlands and agribusiness presents a risk to food system  
48   security and contributes to increasing prices of the country’s

1 farmland beyond the financial ability of local residents to purchase  
2 it; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Monopolization, large agricultural corporations, and  
4 foreign interests in America's farming sector, combined with a  
5 changing climate, creates an unprecedented negative impact on the  
6 regional economic strength and security of agricultural  
7 communities; and

8 **WHEREAS**, The Legislature recognizes the many contributions that  
9 family farmers and ranchers have made to the State and the  
10 country's agricultural industry, local food production, food  
11 sovereignty, rich variety of the country's abundant food supply, and  
12 traditional and cultural agricultural practices; now, therefore,

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14 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New  
15 Jersey (the Senate concurring):

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17 1. a. This Legislature expresses its support for the agricultural  
18 community and supports the establishment of a Farmers Bill of  
19 Rights, recognizing that farmers should have the right to: access a  
20 competitive open marketplace to buy seeds, fertilizer, and other  
21 goods, and to sell produce, livestock, and meat; feed their  
22 community; access fair capital; protect natural resources and  
23 preserve land-based agricultural resources; food security and access  
24 to domestic farmland; repair their own tractors and equipment;  
25 accurately inform consumers of a product's origin using transparent  
26 labeling; access basic services in rural communities; and preserve a  
27 diverse community of farmers and farming practices.

28 b. This Legislature urges the United States Congress to pass  
29 Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 36 of 2020 supporting a Farmers  
30 Bill of Rights.

31 c. This Legislature further urges all relevant federal and State  
32 agencies to take any available action to support the agricultural  
33 community.

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35 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,  
36 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the  
37 Secretary of the Senate to the President and Vice-President of the  
38 United States, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United  
39 States Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States  
40 House of Representatives, the Secretary of the United States  
41 Department of Agriculture, the Governor of the State of New  
42 Jersey, the Secretary of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture,  
43 and every member of Congress elected from the State of New  
44 Jersey.

1 STATEMENT

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3 This concurrent resolution expresses the support of the  
4 Legislature for the agricultural community and supports the  
5 establishment of a Farmers Bill of Rights, recognizing that farmers  
6 should have the right to: access a competitive open marketplace to  
7 buy seeds, fertilizer, and other goods, and to sell produce, livestock,  
8 and meat; feed their community; access fair capital; protect natural  
9 resources and preserve land-based agricultural resources; food  
10 security and access to domestic farmland; repair their own tractors  
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